

Budget Hearing for Special Meeting

Thursday, June 8, at 7:00P.M.
North Conway Water Precinct Office
104 Sawmill Lane North Conway, NH

Present:

Commissioner Suzanne Nelson
Commissioner James Umberger
Superintendent Jason Gagnon
Fire Chief Chad McCarthy
Karen Umberger

Kristine Cluff
Robert T. Anderson
Arthur Hill Jr.
Patrick Scanlon
Recording Secretary Hannah Andersen.

Commissioner Suzanne Nelson called the Budget Hearing to order at 7:00P.M. and read the purpose of the meeting, followed by the Article up for discussion.

The North Conway Water Precinct will hold a Special Budget Hearing for the purpose of disclosing and discussing the proposed appropriation of \$240,000 to purchase 96 +/- acres within the groundwater protection zone of the Precinct's drinking water wells. The sole order of business at the Special Budget Hearing shall be disclosing and discussing the proposed purchase of this property.

Article 01: Purchase of Property for Groundwater Protection

To see if the voters of the North Conway Water Precinct will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$240,000 (gross budget) for purchase of 96 +/- acres within the Precinct's groundwater protection zone to permanently protect the Precinct's drinking water supply from potentially adverse impacts from private activity on this property. This land purchase will be funded from sewer operating budget and shall be offset by \$240,000 in cash from the CVFD Interconnect fund and shall have no tax impact. Simple majority vote required.

Kristine Cluff inquired about the location of the property and Superintendent Gagnon explained that the land is behind the Hill's Florist Building but there is nothing on Route 116. The land is west of the Railroad tracks.

Robert T. Anderson asked about why the Precinct needs to purchase the property and Superintendent Gagnon explained that we have no control over zoning and the land is within the Precinct's Ground Water Protection Zone as identified by DES, meaning it is within the area that has the potential to impact our groundwater should something happen. There was a brief discussion about the various scenarios that could contribute to an event that would impact the

Wells, including chemicals leaching from agriculture, as well as potential equipment failures that could leak chemicals and oils into the ground.

Robert T. Anderson brought up a perceived issue with the funding source of the purchase being from the Conway Village Interconnect. As he recollects, that money was supposed to be used for the sole purpose of reducing taxes and argues that the money should not be used this way. He asked why the Precinct wouldn't file for imminent domain and take the property. Commissioner Nelson stated that the Precinct does not want to go out and start taking people's land.

Patrick Scanlan stated that he and his father put in one of the bids on the land. His father is a lifelong Forrester and they were happy to hear it was the Water Precinct that won the bid on the land. He inquired about the Precinct's intentions with the property and asked about the possibility of the Precinct entering into Easement Agreements and potentially putting the land back on the market. Superintendent Gagnon explained that the Precinct has been in communication with the Upper Saco Valley Land Trust. They are very interested in purchasing a conservation easement from the Precinct to maintain the use of the land as it always has been while still protecting our water. That will offset the price of the land. I think there is a strong possibility that we will end up netting paying for much less.

Kristine Cluff asked about Water and Sewer connections at that property and Superintendent Gagnon stated that since it is outside of the Precinct's boundaries, that would be up to the Lower Bartlett Water Precinct.

Robert T. Anderson inquired about the relationship between the Upper Saco Valley Land Trust and the north Conway Water Precinct and the potential about them purchasing an easement from the Precinct. Superintendent Gagnon said that they have been in communication with the Land Trust but there is not a number in place yet. They need to have the language worked out before there is an easement. He mentioned we could have the number for the Special Meeting.

Commissioner Nelson reiterated that purchase of the land is of vital importance to the Precinct and while we are working towards the Easement, we have to be ready to go with how the article is written without the caveats on the side. We'll work to get as much funding back as possible but the land purchase can't hang on it.

There was a brief discussion about the accounting of the funds for the purchase and where revenue associated to this purchase will go after the fact. Superintendent Gagnon stated that DRA, NHMA, our lawyers and the accountants are all ok with the funding of the project standing as presented. Where the money will sit afterwards can ultimately be up to the voters.

There was a brief discussion on the timeline of the purchase and The Special Meeting is scheduled for July 5th. We've signed an addendum to the Purchase and Sale for closing in July.

There was a brief discussion about the current owners of the property and the surrounding plots and Commissioner Nelson brought up that it's going to be good to have ongoing conversations

with land owners about what's acceptable and what's not for the preservation of the Town's drinking water.

Kristine Cluff asked about the car dealership on 116 and Superintendent Gagnon said that the Precinct had a BMP inspection with them just last year and their operations seem to be on the up and up.

Motion of Commissioner Umberger and seconded by Commissioner Nelson to move this project to the Special Meeting.

Motion carried by a 2-0 voice vote.

Motion of Commissioner Nelson and seconded by Commission Umberger to adjourn the Budget Hearing at 7:27PM.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'Hannah Andersen', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Hannah Andersen
Recording Secretary